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Front Lines

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ethos

e'thos n. Social. The fundamental spirit of a culture.

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FRONT LINES

THE POWER OF THE PRESS

Although my body was numb from the coldness which seeped through my nostrils at 6:15 a.m., I still managed to sense the excitement hovering in the air as I waited along with other local reporters outside the Memorial Union on the morning of April 25, 1995.

This was no ordinary press event. The President of the United States was addressing rural Americans on issues such as taxes, trade and the economic plan. Issues which directly affect the growth of a community. Speakers from Georgia, Minnesota, Pennsylvania and Michigan travelled to Ames, Iowa, to create history.

Awaiting a credentials check, I wondered if I would be granted permission to enter the gala event. I had seen on the local news how some people had been arrested after the FBI ran a credentials check. No, I hadn't robbed any 7-Elevens lately. It was just a matter of a couple of speeding tickets I had acquired in my reckless days of high school. After what seemed like a life or death situation, I was granted entrance and was shocked to find the Sun Room empty except for a few dozen generic telephones waiting mutely for the barrage of media to use and abuse them. Apparently White House Security didn't mind if I had a lead foot.

Before I could even contemplate calling home to mom on an "official phone," the stillness was replaced by this heightened anxiousness that I could sense among the locals. Was it Bill? Better yet, had Socks decided to make a cameo appearance?

No, it was the members of the White House Press Corps, donned in bright red Iowa State baseball caps, (possibly a V.I.P. present from Martin) taking claim of their modern day fortress which had been altered to pamper the pooh-bahs for a mere \$129,240.89.

As I stepped out of Tom Harkin's way while escorting a Time photographer to the ladies' room, I couldn't help but imagine myself as part of this lurking body known as the media elite.

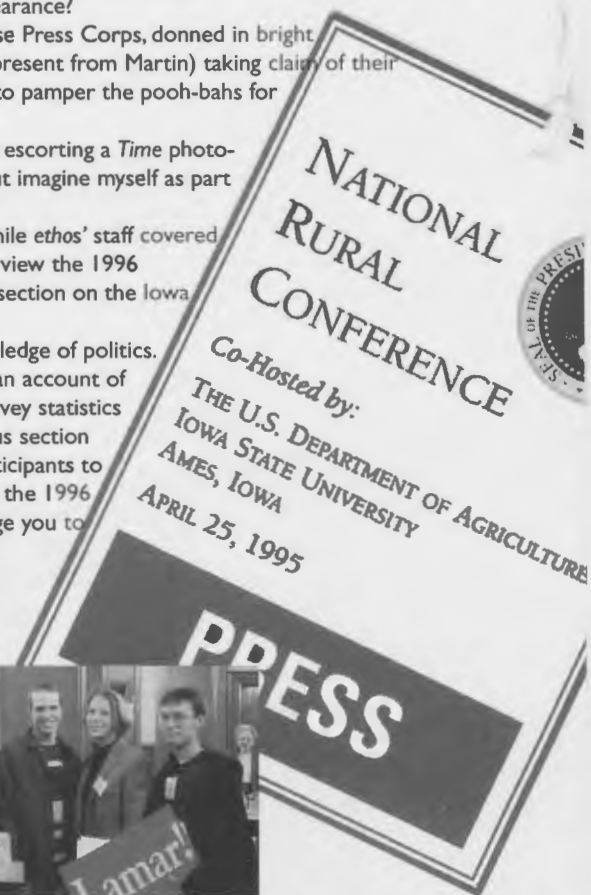
Recently, I experienced this feeling again while *ethos'* staff covered the Iowan's for Tax Relief Convention to interview the 1996 presidential candidates for this issue's special section on the Iowa Caucuses (pages 24-27).

November's issue is dedicated to the knowledge of politics. The cover story, "Discovering Politics," gives an account of the political attitudes on campus and uses survey statistics to further reveal student attitudes. The Caucus section includes interviews with the 1996 caucus participants to better inform voters of the choices. Although the 1996 presidential election is a year away, I encourage you to get involved in politics and make a difference. What are you waiting for?

— Jen Schroeder
editor in chief



Left to right: Aaron Barstow, Jennifer Holland, Matt Seifert, Jen Schroeder and John Loecke during a break at the Iowans for Tax Relief Convention in Des Moines.



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